



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
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DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
LANSING

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## Michigan Bureau of Elections

Michigan election law, MCL 168.21, designates the Secretary of State as the state's "chief election officer":

"The secretary of state shall be the chief election officer of the state and shall have supervisory control over local election officials in the performance of their duties under the provisions of this act."

The Bureau of Elections was established under legislation enacted in 1951 to assist with the administration of the Secretary of State's election-related duties and responsibilities.

Major Program areas:

- 1) Election Administration
- 2) Campaign Finance
- 3) Lobbyist Disclosure
- 4) Great Seal

### 1) Election Administration

#### Michigan election system:

- One of the most decentralized in the country. The Bureau of Elections supervises and assists 83 county clerks, 277 city clerks and 1,240 township clerks - all who administer elections independently.
- 4873 precincts statewide; the majority of jurisdictions in the state consist of a single precinct.

TOTAL PRECINCTS	# OF JURISDICTIONS
1 Precinct	978
2 Precincts	200
3-10 Precincts	269
11-20 Precincts	35
21-50 Precincts	31
Over 50 Precincts	4
Total	1517

## Major Programs:

- Qualified Voter File (QVF)
  - First developed in 1996 – national model
  - Approximately 930 jurisdictions with access; remaining are supported by counties
  - Voter registration, AV ballot issuance, election geography, election administration
  - Tie to Driver File
  - Active / Inactive Voters
    - Total Registered Voters: 7,409,313
    - Active: 6,529,910
    - Inactive: 879,403
    - Inactive = has not voted in six years or has not responded to a confirmation notice
  - Other Programs Generated from QVF:
    - Michigan Voter Information Center (MVIC) – [www.michigan.gov/vote](http://www.michigan.gov/vote)
    - Electronic creation and transmission of military/overseas ballots
    - Optical scan ballot creation / programming / test files (including ballots for accessible voting system)
    - Official Candidate Listing
    - Canvass Reporting
    - Election Night Reporting (pilot phase, 17 counties)
    - Electronic Pollbook (EPB)
    - Election Management Portal (EMP) – online AV tracking



- Education / Training for Election Officials:
  - Clerk Accreditation (new clerks) – 10 or more sessions each year
  - Ongoing Education / Two-Year Re-accreditation Program – required under legislation passed in 2012; modular format, combination in-person and online training (will be rolled out in 2013)

- Training Schools – Even years, 8-10 regional sessions for counties and larger jurisdictions that conduct Election Inspector training
- Election Cycle – Even years, one session per county for all clerks in county; covers all major election year issues (filing to canvassing)
- Board of County Canvassers – Even years, 20 regional sessions
- Online Training Program – Coming in 2013:
  - One-stop resource for election official training
  - Online training courses
  - Videos
  - Manuals/Resources
  - Registration for in-person classes
  - Accreditation exercises / exams
  - User groups / blogs
  - Webinars / remote training
  - Tracking by individual user/clerk
- Technical Training
  - Qualified Voter File (QVF) – weekly, in-person small groups
  - Electronic Pollbook (EPB) – weekly, in-person small groups
  - Election Management Portal (EMP) – AV tracking (new system)
  - Online, webinar options for all tech programs coming soon
- Electronic Pollbook (EPB)
  - Internally developed
  - Replaces traditional paper pollbook
  - Faster, more accurate voter check-in, ballot issuance, voter history
  - Requires less staff in polling place
  - As of 2012, over 1000 jurisdictions and 80% of precincts statewide
  - Additional rollouts in 2013
- Voting systems
  - Statewide – optical scan
  - Help America Vote Act – statewide contracts/purchase 2004-2005
  - Expected life
  - Future possibilities
- Military/Overseas Voting
  - 45-day deadline for transmitting ballots
  - E-transmittal; Hard-copy mail return
  - 16,051 military/overseas ballots requested; 11,760 returned (Nov. 2012)
  - Much work, improvement with locals in 2012 in meeting statutory deadlines
  - Will continue to track compliance down to local level
  - New law: extend ballot receipt deadline for ballots transmitted late

- Board of State Canvassers
  - Four-member bipartisan Board responsible for certifying petitions, canvassing elections, approving new voting equipment for use in the state, and (new) approving state/county officer recall language and petition filings
  - Secretary of State schedules and coordinates meetings
- Petition Processing – BOE receives and processes:
  - Nominating and qualifying petitions filed by candidates seeking federal and state offices
  - New political party petitions
  - Initiative and referendum petitions
  - Recall petitions filed against federal, state and county officers
  - Approximately 510,275 sheets and 3,610,000 signatures
- Ballot Standards
  - BOE publishes with clerk input
  - Updated annually
  - Ensures consistent approach
- Post-Election Audits
  - Legislation passed in late 2012
  - Pilot program coming (16 county volunteers)
  - Focus: post-election validation/verification
  - State, counties may audit
    - Counties audit precincts randomly selected by state
  - Will become ongoing program after each election

## **2) Campaign Finance**

- Bureau of Elections oversees Secretary of State duties related to enforcement of the Campaign Finance Act and to disclosure by reviewing filings submitted by candidates, committees, and political parties.
- *Electronic Filing*: Michigan Electronic Reporting and Tracking System (MERTS) - a program which permits the electronic submission of campaign finance disclosure documents by committees registered on the state level.

### **CAMPAIGN FINANCE FILINGS: 2012**

	<b>Candidate Committees</b>	<b>Gubernatorial Committees</b>	<b>PACs</b>	<b>Parties</b>	<b>Ballot Questions</b>	<b>Totals</b>
Active	1,757	16	1,211	286	110	3,380
Waiver*	984	9	385	149	62	1,589
No Waiver	773	7	826	137	48	1,752
Received (MERTS)**	80%	42%	79%	88%	91%	84%

\*Waiver = Filings \$1,000 or less are not required to report.

\*\*Percentage based on number of committees who received software

### **Campaign Finance Filings: 2012 Compliance**

Number of Statements Required	6,005
Number of Failure to File Notifications Sent	368
Number 2012 Campaign Finance reports outstanding	107
Number of Referrals to the Attorney General (Failure to File)	189

### **3) Lobbyist Disclosure**

The Bureau of Elections is responsible for registering lobbyists and lobby agents under the Michigan Lobby Registration Act. Lobbyists are typically interest groups; lobbyist agents are the individuals and firms that represent these interest groups.

#### **LOBBY REGISTRATION**

	<b>Lobbyist</b>	<b>Lobby Agents</b>	<b>Totals</b>
Active	1,398	1,491	2,889
Filing Electronic	74.4%	73.77%	74.08%

### **Lobby Registration: 2012 Compliance**

Number of Statements Required	6173
Number of Failure to File Notifications Sent	134
Number of 2012 Registration Statements outstanding	12
Number of Referrals to the Attorney General (Failure to File)	35

### **4) Great Seal**

Duties of the Office of the Great Seal include:

- Keeper of the Great Seal – affixes the State Seal to authorized items/documents and ensure its proper use.
- Accepts documents for filing from certain local and state government officials, including:
  - Boundary changes
  - Executive Orders of the Governor
  - Public Acts
- Commission Notaries: approximately 800 notaries public are commissioned each month. The total number of notaries public currently commissioned in the State of Michigan is over 120,000.
- Certifies the authenticity of a Michigan official's signature and the capacity that official acted in.